

Division of Aquatic Resources
Lay Net Proposal Survey

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this short survey on our proposals to better manage lay nets. We have discussed with lay net users, net suppliers, and even non-net users how they think lay net use can be improved. These discussions formed the basis for these proposal items. We would now like to ask the general public how they feel about these proposals. It is still very early in the process to change the current regulations on the use of lay nets. We would like to get your ideas on how they should be changed before we make them into more formal regulations. The following survey is intended to gather your comments more completely.

1. What island do you live on? (survey is for Hawaii residents only)
☐ Oahu ☐ Hawaii ☐ Maui ☐ Kauai ☐ Molokai ☐ Lanai
2. Many people think that there are less reef fish today compared to ten years ago. Do you think that there are less, the same, or more reef fish today compared to ten years ago? ☐ Less ☐ Same ☐ More
3. Many people think that one of the reasons for this decline in fish is due to the irresponsible use of lay nets in the inshore reef. Do you think that the State should manage the use of lay nets better so that the irresponsible users become responsible users? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How could the State manage lay nets better?

4. Many people think that another reason for this decline in reef fish is due to the killing of immature reef fish before they can reproduce and provide more fish for the next generation. Do you think that the State should protect immature fish so that they can reproduce before they are caught? ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. One of the ways to prevent nets from taking or killing immature reef fish is to make minimum mesh sizes for nets. Do you think that there should be a minimum mesh size for lay nets to prevent the catching of immature fish?
☐ Yes ☐ No

The current legal minimum mesh size is 2 3/4 inches. Our proposal is to leave this unchanged. Should this size be changed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Lay nets could waste fish if the user does not remove the fish caught in the net before the fish spoils. To prevent this waste, the net should be regularly inspected to remove the fish that are caught. Current law requires that the user must inspect the net before the net has been in the water for two hours. Our proposal is to keep this requirement unchanged. Do you think that this should be changed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Some people leave their lay nets in the water for several days at a time. This has the potential to overfish an area. Do you think that there should be some time limit on how long lay nets should be left in the water? ☐ Yes ☐ No
The current law limits the soak time for lay nets at four hours, after which time the net must be removed. Should this time limit be changed and if yes, what should it be changed to? ☐ Yes ☐ No Change to: _____
How would you limit lay net soak time?
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8. Many people think that there should be limits on how large lay nets can be. Do you think that lay nets should have some physical size limits? ☐ Yes ☐ No

There are currently no limits on the height or length of lay nets. There are some people that use 40 feet high and three mile long lay nets. Our proposal is to limit the height of lay nets to 12 feet and to limit the length of non-commercial lay nets to 500 feet and commercial lay nets to 1,200 feet. What do you think the size limits should be?

9. There are people who would join two or more of their nets together to make a net that is longer than the maximum length limit. To prevent people from joining two or more nets together to exceed the maximum length limit, we are proposing that nets cannot be used within 100 feet of another net (not your own or your partners). How would you prevent the joining of nets to exceed the maximum length limit?
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10. Some people use lay nets that have several overlapping layers such as one layer that is four inch mesh and one that is three inch. These nets are known as trammel nets or skirted lay nets and can catch smaller fish if the fish get caught between the layers or are gilled in both layers. Our proposal is to not allow the use of these kinds of nets. Do you think that these nets should not be allowed?
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11. Many people think that the use of lay nets at night create many problems such as divers swimming into nets, boats running over nets, turtles entangling in nets, users not checking the nets as often and fish spoiling if dead and left too long. Our proposal is to not allow the use of lay net at night. Do you think that lay nets should not be allowed at night? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you want to allow the use of lay nets at night, how would you better manage their use?

12. Some people think that the larger fish live in deeper waters and the use of lay nets in these deeper waters may remove these larger, reproducing fish and deplete these resources faster. They also think that if lay nets are limited to the shallow waters, the larger fish will not be taken as quickly. In addition, lay net users can dive the nets and untangle them from the reef if the water is shallow enough. Our proposal is to limit the use of lay nets to 80 feet. Do you think that lay nets should be limited by how deep they can be used and, if yes, what should that depth be? ☐ Yes ☐ No Max depth: _____

13. Many people feel that there is a lack of enforcement of our fishing regulations. We are trying to help our officers by making it easier for them to identify who owns or uses lay nets. One of the ways to make it easier for the officers is to require that the net user stay close to the net while its in the water. Our proposal is to require that the net be attended, with a half hour break to get lunch, get supplies, or use the restroom. How would you try to keep the net user close to the net?

14. Another way to make it easier is to register and tag each lay net. Our proposal is to require users to register and tag each lay net in the water. How would you help our officers identify lay net users?

15. Our enforcement officers have asked us to consider requiring that marker buoys be placed on lay nets so that they may be seen more clearly from a distance. Our proposal is to require at least two marker buoys (one on each end) while the net is in the water. Do you think that marker buoys on lay nets should be required? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How would you help our officers see nets in the water from a distance?

Thank you for your comments.

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